



# NEWS

**For Immediate Release  
November 14, 2002**

**Final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact Documents  
Available for UMTRA Ground Water Project Site at Durango, Colorado**

(Grand Junction, CO)—The U.S. Department of Energy Grand Junction Office (DOE–GJO) announces the availability of the final *Environmental Assessment of Ground Water Compliance at the Durango, Colorado, UMTRA Project Site* and the Finding of No Significant Impact document for the site. The *Environmental Assessment* provides information concerning the potential effects of the planned ground-water compliance strategies for the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Ground Water Project site at Durango. The Finding of No Significant Impact states that no significant adverse environmental impacts will occur from the planned strategies and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not needed.

The UMTRA Ground Water Project site at Durango is a former uranium-ore processing site located 0.25 mile southwest of the city of Durango in La Plata County. The former millsite consists of two geographically contiguous, but hydrogeologically separate, areas: the mill tailings area and the raffinate ponds area.

DOE will implement distinct compliance strategies for the mill tailings area and the raffinate ponds area to address separately the constituents of concern in the ground water at each area. The compliance strategy for the mill tailings area is to allow natural flushing of the aquifer to decrease contaminant concentrations.

The compliance strategy for the raffinate ponds area is no further remediation in conjunction with the application of supplemental standards for the ground-water constituents. Supplemental standards will be applied on the basis of the criterion of limited-use ground water because the elevated selenium concentrations are a result of natural sources and are not related to historical uranium-ore processing at the former mill.

(more)

In conjunction with the compliance strategy for each area, DOE will ensure that in-place institutional controls are maintained to prevent future use of the ground water beneath the site. Institutional controls protect public health and the environment by limiting access to a contaminated medium. DOE will also continue monitoring ground water and surface water.

Reference copies of the *Environmental Assessment* and the Finding of No Significant Impact will be placed in the Durango Public Library in Durango; the Cortez Public Library in Cortez, Colorado; the Mesa County Public Library in Grand Junction, Colorado; and the DOE–GJO Public Reading Room in Grand Junction by November 26, 2002. The documents will also be available on the DOE–GJO website at [www.gjo.doe.gov/ugw/sites/co/durango/durango.htm](http://www.gjo.doe.gov/ugw/sites/co/durango/durango.htm). Copies may be requested by contacting DOE–GJO toll-free at 1–800–399–5618.

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**News Contacts:**

Donald R. Metzler	DOE–GJO Project Manager	970–248–7612
Audrey Berry	DOE–GJO Public Affairs Specialist	970–248–7727
Sam Marutzky	S.M. Stoller Corporation Project Manager	970–248–6059
Wendee Ryan	S.M. Stoller Corporation Public Affairs Manager	970–248–6765